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ABSTRACT

In its second extension year following a 3-year federal funding cycle, Project GET SET served 163 junior high school students of limited ability in both English and Spanish at two Bronx junior high schools. The project's aim was to reinforce English and native language skills and to offer students personal counseling, informative programs that would involve their parents, and career guidance. Students also worked with a part-time tutor. The program met its proposed objectives for native language development, and the noninstructional objectives were met for career seminars, parent programs, and staff training and development. Project GET SET only partially achieved the objectives in English language development and curriculum material preparation. The project exposed students to a variety of traditional and nontraditional career opportunities through a range of bilingual reference works, field trips, and lecture programs. Parents could participate in four workshops, and teachers and guidance counselors each attended three workshops. Recommendations for improvement include completion of the educational curriculum materials, and training mainstream teachers in the project's instructional methods. (MSE)

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OREA Report

EVALUATION SECTION REPORT

PROJECT GET SET
1987-1988

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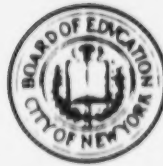
EVALUATION SECTION
John E. Schoener, Chief Administrator
June 1989

EVALUATION SECTION REPORT

PROJECT GET SET
1987-1988

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PROJECT GET SET*
1987-88

SUMMARY

- Project GET SET was fully implemented. During the 1987-88 year the program provided English- and native-language instruction and a career awareness curriculum to 163 students. It also provided training programs for parents and for school staff.
- Project students partially met the proposed objective for English-language development and met the objective for native-language development. The project met its noninstructional objectives in the areas of extracurricular activities for students, parental training, and staff development, and partially met the objective for materials development.

In its second extension year following a three-year Title VII funding cycle, Project GET SET served 163 junior high school students of limited ability in both English and Spanish. The students attended J.H.S. 80 and J.H.S. 143, both located in economically depressed, predominantly Hispanic neighborhoods in the Bronx.

Project GET SET's aim was to reinforce English- and native-language skills; to offer personal counseling to students and informative programs that would involve their parents; and to offer career guidance to students. The project was administered by the Office of Bilingual Education (O.B.E.) of the New York City Public Schools.

A resource specialist provided participating students with supplementary instruction in English and career skills, coordinated project activities and resources with the director, helped with administrative tasks and program implementation, and instructed teachers in the use of project-supplied curricula and curricular aids. GET SET organized career-information seminars for students, and a variety of informative programs for parents. Students also worked with a part-time student tutor. Project personnel used the Language Assessment Battery (LAB), English and Spanish versions, and the Degrees of Reading Power (D.R.P.) test in pretesting and posttesting.

The Office of Research, Evaluation, and Assessment (OREA) examined student performance on the LAB and D.R.P. tests, reviewed program materials, and evaluated information obtained

*This summary is based on the final evaluation of the "Project GET SET 1987-88" prepared by the OREA Bilingual Education Evaluation Unit.

from interviews of program and school personnel and from classroom observation in their evaluation of the program.

Project GET SET met its proposed objective for native-language development and its noninstructional objectives concerning student career seminars, programs for parents, and staff training and development. The program did not meet its objective for English-language development and partially achieved its objective in the preparation of curriculum materials.

Students' gains in English-language proficiency for 1987-88 were consistent with those observed in 1986-87. In 1986-87, students tested with the D.R.P. showed small gains in English proficiency. This year, students showed no significant improvement when tested with the D.R.P., but pre- to posttest scores on the LAB evidenced significant improvement in English-language skills. During the current program year, students showed even greater gains in native-language development than they had last year.

Project GET SET exposed students to a variety of traditional and nontraditional career opportunities through a range of bilingual reference works, field trips, and lecture programs. Parents could participate in four workshops; teachers and guidance counselors attended three workshops each. The project developed an information packet.

The conclusions, based on the findings of this evaluation, lead to the following recommendations:

- The project should complete the educational curriculum materials.
- Mainstream staff and teachers should receive full training in GET SET's instructional methods so that they can incorporate these elements into the standard curriculum, establishing continuity in students' language development and exposure to a range of career opportunities.

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I. INTRODUCTION

The 1987-88 year of Project GET SET was the second extension year following a three-year Title VII funding cycle. Since its inception five years ago, Project GET SET has provided supportive and peer-tutorial services to dually limited* Hispanic junior high school students, and pursued the following objectives: to reinforce English-language skills, especially reading and writing; to reinforce native language skills; to offer personal counseling services; to offer career guidance; and to instruct teachers and other staff in this curriculum. In this final year, three program materials for establishing future curricula were to be developed.

In 1987-88, GET SET served 163 limited English proficient (LEP) students in grades seven through nine. About half of the students were in eighth grade. Most of the students were born in the United States, the Dominican Republic, and Puerto Rico (see Table 1).

The overwhelming majority of project students came from family backgrounds characterized by low literacy levels (in both Spanish and English), poverty, and often emotional problems. Their educational deficits and difficult family circumstances put them at severe risk of failing academically and dropping out of school.

*Students scoring below the twenty-first percentile on the English version of the Language Assessment Battery (LAB) and even lower on the Spanish version.

TABLE 1
Number and Percent of Project Students
by Country of Birth

Country of Birth	Number	Percent
United States	79	49.1
Dominican Republic	43	26.7
Puerto Rico	24	14.9
Panama	3	2.0
Cuba	2	1.2
Mexico	2	1.2
El Salvador	2	1.2
Honduras	1	0.6
Colombia	1	0.6
Ecuador	1	0.6
Peru	1	0.6
Bolivia	1	0.6
Central and South America (Country Unspecified)	<u>1</u>	<u>0.6</u>
TOTAL	161 ^a	99.9 ^b

^aData were missing for two students.

^bNumbers do not sum to 100 because of rounding.

•Most participants were born in the United States.

DELIVERY OF SERVICES

It was necessary to plan and modify project activities for this final year of funding in order to ensure that some degree of institutionalization and information dissemination among the teaching and guidance staff would take place.

A student tutor from James Monroe High School aided the resource specialist, who worked with small groups of students to develop their language skills, while exposing them to career-oriented issues.

This year the project offered four parent workshops. Topics included information for parents about services provided by ASPIRA*. The workshops were offered at both sites; attendance varied from 10 to 14 persons.

The project offered three workshops to Community School District (C.S.D.) 10's guidance staff in order to inform them about the project's services, to discuss differences that may occur when dealing with culturally diverse students, and to inform counselors about ASPIRA's services. Classroom teachers also received services from Project GET SET. There were three in-service training opportunities where teachers might increase their knowledge of resources, their understanding of LEP students, and their utilization of community and field resources in the development of students' language ability. The project director designed and distributed a newly formatted booklet that

*ASPIRA is a nonprofit national organization with local chapters, dedicated to promoting the educational advancement of Hispanic youth.

described the project and its services, and included sample lesson plans.

Students from several Bronx junior high and intermediate schools attended an all-day career fair and special assembly held at Lehman College.

STAFF

GET SET's staff consisted of a project director, a resource specialist, and a part-time student tutor. The project director provided the resource specialist with guidance and practical support, reviewed assessment instruments, furnished evaluation information, and managed the day-to-day activities of the program.

The resource specialist spent two days a week at one site and three days a week at the other. She provided participating students with supplementary instruction in English and career skills, helped with program implementation, and instructed teachers in the use of project-supplied curricula and curricular aids.

The project director for the 1987-88 year had earned a doctorate in curriculum/instruction, and had considerable background experience as a teacher, trainer, and researcher.

The recipient of a master's degree, the resource specialist had many years of experience as a community worker and career and guidance counselor for minorities, in particular, for Hispanic women. She had been a bilingual teacher for seven years.

SETTING

Both sites were located in economically depressed parts of C.S.D. 10 in the Bronx; the majority of students were eligible for the federally sponsored free lunch program. Both schools were overcrowded.

HISTORY OF PROGRAM

This was the project's fifth year. A full description of the previous years can be found in the evaluation report of 1986-87.

REPORT FORMAT

This report is organized as follows: Chapter II describes the evaluation methodology; Chapter III presents an analysis of the qualitative and quantitative findings of the evaluation; and Chapter IV offers conclusions and recommendations based on the results of the evaluation.

II. EVALUATION METHODOLOGY

EVALUATION QUESTIONS

The evaluation assessed two major areas: program implementation and outcomes. Evaluation questions are as follows:

Process/Implementation

- Have the instructional activities for developing English-language proficiency been implemented as described?
- Have the instructional activities for developing native-language proficiency been implemented as described?
- Have the students received personal counseling?
- Has the project provided career education and counseling?
- Did the project hold at least three workshops for parents?

Outcome

- What was the average gain in English-language proficiency and English reading skills, as measured by the LAB and D.R.P.?
- What was the average gain in native-language proficiency and test scores, as measured by the Spanish version of the LAB?

EVALUATION PROCEDURES

Sample

The Office of Research, Evaluation, and Assessment (OREA) evaluated Project GET SET through on-site visits to scheduled events, interviews with project staff; and an examination of documents, project products, and workshop evaluations. It also examined student achievement data.

Instruments

To evaluate students' progress in English-language development, students were pretested and posttested on the Degrees of Reading Power (D.R.P.) Test."

To evaluate students' progress in native-language development, students were pretested and posttested on the Spanish version of the Language Assessment Battery** (LAB). The project also considered other indicators, such as report card grades.

Data Analysis

In order to assess achievement, raw scores on the D.R.P. and LAB were converted to normal curve equivalent (N.C.E.) scores.***

*The Degrees of Reading Power Test was developed by the College Board to provide information about student reading ability on the same scale used to describe the difficulty of textbooks.

** The Language Assessment Battery (LAB) was developed by the Board of Education of the City of New York to measure the English-language proficiency of nonnative speakers of English in order to determine whether their level of English proficiency is sufficient to enable them to participate effectively in classes taught in English. Students scoring below the twenty-first percentile on the LAB are entitled to bilingual and E.S.L. services.

***Raw scores were converted to N.C.E. scores, which are normalized standard scores. They have the advantage of forming an equal interval scale so that scores and gains can be averaged. For the norming population, N.C.E.s have a mean of 50, a standard deviation of approximately 20, and a range from one to 99. Scores can be compared to the norming population.

Correlated t -tests and effect sizes* on pretest and posttest N.C.E. scores for each grade level were computed to determine if the changes in scores were statistically significant.

Limitations

Since all program-eligible students were involved either in the current project or another program, it was impossible to select a similar comparison group. In addition, since English proficient students do not take pretests and posttests of the LAB, a gap-reduction design was not feasible.

The project did not provide data on all program participants. However, the number of students for whom there were data were large enough to make the analyses meaningful.

*The effect size, developed by Jacob Cohen, is a ratio of the mean gain to the standard deviation of the gain. This ratio provides an index of improvement in standard deviation units irrespective of the size of the sample. Effect size (E.S.) is interpreted to indicate educational meaningfulness, and an E.S. of .80 is thought to be highly meaningful, while one of .2 is considered to be only slightly so.

III. EVALUATION FINDINGS

INSTRUCTIONAL ACTIVITIES

Project GET SET provided English- and native-language instruction; enrichment classes on career options and skills; personal and career counseling; and parent, teacher, and guidance counselor workshops.

English as a Second Language

The program objective for English as a second language was as follows:

- By June 1988, participating students will demonstrate a significant increase in English language skills as measured by the Language Assessment Battery and/or the Degrees of Reading Power Test (D.R.P.).

The resource specialist provided students with supplementary instruction in English. With the aid of the student tutor, she worked with groups of five to 15 students to develop their language skills through exposure to career-oriented issues.

Achievement in English as a Second Language. Students were pretested and posttested on the D.R.P. In order to assess achievement, raw scores were converted to normal curve equivalent (N.C.E.) scores. Correlated t-tests on pretest and posttest N.C.E. scores for each grade level were computed to determine if the changes in scores were statistically significant. (See Table 2.)

The project provided data for 122 students--73 percent of the target group. Of this number, 47 had complete results for

TABLE 2

Pretest/Posttest N.C.E. Differences
on the Language Assessment Battery, by Grade

Grade	N	<u>Pretest</u>		<u>Posttest</u>		<u>Difference</u>		<u>t</u> Value	Effect Size
		Mean	S.D.	Mean	S.D.	Mean	S.D.		
7	16	10.5	9.0	11.9	10.1	1.5	7.3	.80	.21
8	17	8.6	9.6	14.8	11.9	6.2	5.7	4.35*	1.09
9	14	9.8	9.2	18.7	12.7	8.9	6.5	4.94*	1.37
TOTAL	47	9.6	9.1	5.0	11.6	5.3	7.1	5.16*	.74

* $p < .05$

- Eighth and ninth graders made statistically significant gains on the LAB.

the LAB, and 75 had complete results for the D.R.P. Students tested with the D.R.P. did not show any significant increase in their scores; however, eighth- and ninth-grade students tested with the LAB did show a significant increase ($p < .05$) from pre- to posttest. These students made mean gains of 6.2 and 8.9 N.C.E.s, respectively. The corresponding effect sizes of 1.09 and 1.37, respectively, indicate that the increase in scores was highly educationally meaningful. The change in scores of seventh-grade students showed a small effect size (0.21). For them the increase was not educationally meaningful. Overall, the students exhibited a mean N.C.E. gain of 5.3 (effect size = .74) and this proved to be significant. Therefore, this objective was achieved.

Native Language Arts

The program objective for native language arts was as follows:

- By June 1988, participating students will demonstrate a significant increase in Spanish language arts skills as measured by the Language Assessment Battery (LAB) and/or other indicators such as report card grades, etc.

The resource specialist provided students with instruction in Spanish, using a text that emphasizes writing skills and focuses on themes related to immigration. Students developed skills in Spanish in conjunction with the career-awareness curriculum, which stressed the importance of bilingual skills.

Achievement in Native Language Arts. Correlated t -tests on pretest and posttest N.C.E. scores for each grade level were computed to determine if the changes in scores were statistically significant. (See Table 3.) Project GET SET provided data for 118 students. Students in all three grades made significant gains ($p < .05$) in their N.C.E. scores. The large effect sizes corresponding to these N.C.E. gains bolster the finding that these gains were educationally meaningful. The program achieved its proposed objective in this area.

TABLE 3

Pretest/Posttest N.C.E. Score Differences
on the Language Assessment Battery (Spanish Version), by Grade

Grade	N	<u>Pretest</u>		<u>Posttest</u>		<u>Difference</u>		T Value	Effect Size
		Mean	S.D.	Mean	S.D.	Mean	S.D.		
7	34	50.5	2.8	54.9	6.5	4.4	4.3	5.92*	1.02
8	52	51.0	2.8	56.6	6.2	5.6	4.0	9.81*	1.40
9	32	52.5	4.1	59.9	7.9	7.4	4.3	9.57*	1.72
TOTAL	118	51.3	3.3	57.0	7.0	5.7	4.3	14.34*	1.33

* $p < .05$

• Students at all grades made statistically significant gains.

Career-Related Instruction

The program objective for career-related instruction was as follows:

- By June 1988, participating students will demonstrate a higher level of career awareness and knowledge of bilingual and nontraditional career opportunities, as compared with non-project students, as measured by project-developed tests.

The project set up a career enrichment center where students could consult Spanish- and English-language books on a wide range of careers. The center also maintained a large collection of employment-related films in both languages, and GET SET organized regular screenings of these films at both sites. Additionally, the resource specialist was developing bilingual curricula covering a broad range of careers.

Achievement in Career-Related Instruction. Although the project had sample tests in English and Spanish, the project did not provide data to assess this objective.

NONINSTRUCTIONAL ACTIVITIES

Field Trips and Guest Speakers

The program objective for field trips and guest speakers was as follows:

- By June 1988, Project GET SET will have provided at least four field trips and four guest speakers related to bilingual careers and planning for high school, as documented by project records.

Project GET SET staff organized field trips to enhance students' awareness of and interest in a wide range of career options. Among the sites visited were Roberto Clemente State

Park, Capital National Bank, Hostos College, Columbia University, and Lehman College, where they participated in a day-long bilingual career fair. Several Hispanic guest lecturers addressed the classes. The project met its objective.

Staff Development

The program objectives for staff development were as follows:

- By June 1988, Project GET SET will have offered at least three on-site training workshops on E.S.L., bilingual career education resources, career education materials, etc., for participating project teachers, as documented by project records.
- By June 1988, Project GET SET will have sponsored at least three workshops for district guidance counselors, on multicultural counseling, community resources, and career education needs of Hispanic students and families, as documented by project records.

Project GET SET offered three workshops for teachers at one of the program sites. The workshops covered the following topics: an overview of services offered to GET SET students, how to better understand LEP students, and how to use field trips and community resources as catalysts for language development. Thus, the program achieved the first objective in this area.

The project offered guidance personnel in C.S.D. 10 three workshops related to students with limited ability in both English and their native language: two dealing with multicultural issues within the counseling setting, and a third highlighting the offerings of ASPIRA. Thus, Project GET SET achieved the second objective in this area.

Parental Training

The program objective for parental training was as follows:

- By June 1988, Project GET SET will have offered at least three parent workshops on bilingual career education and planning for high school/college, as documented by project records.

Parents attended a number of sponsored workshops on such topics as "Teenagers and Their Health" and on the programs and services of ASPIRA. The project met this objective.

Curriculum and Materials Development

The program objective for curriculum and materials development was as follows:

- By August 1988, Project GET SET will have developed the following items:
 - a. Project GET SET Information Packet
 - b. Project GET SET Sample Lesson Plans for Career Education in Spanish and English
 - c. Project GET SET (1987-88) Program Highlights Pamphlet

According to the project director, the first and third proposed items were completed, but the remaining one--the sample lesson plans (item b.)--was in draft form. The program partially met this objective.

IV. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Project GET SET successfully provided most of the services it had proposed. This was largely due to the dedication and commitment of the resource specialist and project director, as well as the cooperation of the principals at both sites.

Operating out of enrichment centers located in small corners of the schools' libraries, the project staff provided supplementary instruction in English-language skills and native language arts, and offered career guidance. Through a program of extracurricular trips and guest lectures, the staff sought to foster students' self-confidence and cultural awareness, and to convey the value of bilingual skills and the necessity of a high school diploma in the contemporary job market.

A review of student performance data revealed that Project GET SET achieved its instructional objectives only in E.S.L. and native language arts. Finally, the project did not provide data to measure an increase in student awareness of career opportunities.

The attempt to integrate the project's career and guidance material with the mainstream curriculum received the enthusiastic support of the administration of both schools, and the project held three workshops each for teachers and guidance counselors to familiarize them with the project's goals and methods.

The project held workshops for parents on a variety of career- and health-oriented topics, thus fulfilling the parental

training objective.

The project achieved its noninstructional objectives in extracurricular activities for students, parental training, and staff development. The objective in curriculum development was partially achieved: only two out of the three proposed items were completed.

It is important to note that the project was still able to meet many of its objectives despite sharp cuts in its fiscal and staff resources, as well as four changes in project leadership. The final project director was committed to making frequent visits to the sites, and was actively involved in all aspects of the program. The entire project staff, given the resources available to them, worked together effectively to meet the needs of the dually limited student.

The conclusions, based on the findings of this evaluation, lead to the following recommendations:

- The project should complete the educational curriculum materials.
- Mainstream staff and teachers should receive full training in GET SET's instructional methods so that they can incorporate these elements into the standard curriculum, establishing continuity in students' language development and exposure to a range of career opportunities.